

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 HA-05 AID-05 EB-08 IGA-02 TRSE-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00
PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00
IO-13 /081 R

DRAFTED BY AF/S:KMCCORMICK:DH
APPROVED BY AF/S:DPETTERSON
AF/S:LMACFARLANE
HA:RMAXIM
AF/I;LSHURTTLEFF
AID/AFR/SA:TQUIMBY (INFO)
-----055871 170006Z /70

O P 162340Z PEB 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MBABANE IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY MASERU PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY GABORONE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 041781

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SHUM, WZ

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT AND AID

REF: A) MBABANE 555; B) STATE 18330

I. SWAZI REFERENCE TO POSSIBLE LINK BETWEEN HUMAN RIGHTS
EVALUATIONS AND FUTURE LEVELS OF AID IS ACCURATE REFLECTION
OF CONVERSATIONS WITH DEPARTMENT. WE ARE NOT AWARE OF HOW
CLOSELY THEY BELIEVE THESE TWO SUBJECTS TO BE CONNECTED,
BUT DEPARTMENT HAS TOLD SWAZIS IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS
THAT (A) CONGRESS CLEARLY INTENDS TO ESTABLISH SUCH A LINK
AND (B) THERE IS LITTLE LIKELIHOOD OF ANY IMMEDIATE THREAT
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TO SWAZI AID LEVELS, PARTICULARLY SINCE FINAL VERSION OF
HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT PORTRAYED GOS AS MAKING GENERALLY
HUMANE AND BONA FIDE EFFORTS TO MINIMIZE ABUSE OF HUMAN
RIGHTS. FOLLOWING BACKGROUND ON DISCUSSIONS IN WASHINGTON
MAY PROVE HELPFUL TO POST IN CONTINUING DIALOGUE WITH GOS
ON SUBJECT.

2. SWAZI EMBASSY HERE WAS INFORMED ON JANUARY 31 THAT HUMAN RIGHTS REPORTS HAD BEEN SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS EARLIER THAT DAY AND WERE LIKELY TO BECOME PUBLIC SOON. AMBASSADOR KUNENE ASKED HOPEFULLY WHETHER IT HAD BEEN POSSIBLE TO AVOID MENTION OF DETENTION ISSUE.

3. DEPARTMENT HAD PREVIOUSLY KEPT KUNENE INFORMED THAT REPORTS WERE BEING PREPARED AND HAD WARNED HIM THAT CRITICISM OF GOS DETENTION PRACTICES COULD NOT BE AVOIDED, PARTICULARLY IN WAKE OF BIKO CASE. HIS HELP WAS SOLICITED IN DOING ANYTHING POSSIBLE TO IMPROVE SITUATION IN ORDER TO ALLOW DEPARTMENT TO WRITE MOST POSITIVE REPORT WHICH FACTS WOULD SUPPORT. KUNENE SAID HE UNDERSTOOD AND SUBSEQUENTLY REPORTED THAT HE HAD BEEN GIVEN ASSURANCES BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER THAT SOME DETAINEES WOULD SOON BE RELEASED AND EXPELLED. HE ASKED WHAT IMPACT THIS WOULD HAVE ON FINAL REPORT. DEPARTMENT REPLIED THAT IT WAS PLEASED TO SEE NUMBER OF DETAINEES REDUCED, AND IF CONFIRMED THIS WOULD HELP CONSIDERABLY IN TAKING EDGE OFF CRITICISM, BUT SINCE FUNDAMENTAL PROBLEM--VIZ., LACK OF LEGAL SAFEGUARDS AGAINST SUCH DETENTION -- REMAINED UNCHANGED IT WAS UNLIKELY REPORT COULD AVOID CRITICISM ALTOGETHER.

4. IN VIEW OF THIS DEPARTMENT'S RESPONSE TO KUNENE'S QUESTION IN PARA I WAS THAT IT HAD NOT REPEAT NOT BEEN CONFIDENTIAL

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POSSIBLE TO IGNORE QUESTION AND HE SHOULD BE PREPARED FOR CRITICISM, EVEN THOUGH HIS CONFIDENTIAL ASSURANCES OF SELECTED FUTURE RELEASES HAD BEEN VERY HELPFUL IN MODERATING TONE OF REPORT. KUNENE HAD NO FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT DETAILS OF REPORT UNTIL COPY WAS PASSED TO HIM FEBRUARY 2, BUT APPARENTLY IMMEDIATELY CABLED TO GOS HIS JUDGMENT THAT REPORT COULD AFFECT AID LEVELS BY MENTION OF SENSITIVE DETENTION ISSUE.

5. IN ANNOUNCING RELEASE OF REPORTS FEBRUARY 9, SENATOR SPARKMAN AND CONGRESSMAN ZABLOCKI DESCRIBED LEGISLATION AS "LINKING A COUNTRY'S HUMAN RIGHTS PERFORMANCE TO THE FOUR MAJOR TYPES OF FOREIGN ASSISTANCE" (REF B). ALL CONVERSATIONS WITH SWAZIS HERE ON HUMAN RIGHTS HAVE STRESSED THAT IN FUTURE THIS WILL BECOME INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT FACTOR IN DETERMINING AID LEVELS, ALTHOUGH OTHER CRITERIA INCLUDING VIABILITY OF SPECIFIC PROJECTS, OVERALL APPROPRIATIONS LEVELS, ETC., WILL OBVIOUSLY CONTINUE.

6. KUNENE TELEPHONED DEPARTMENT FEBRUARY 2 AFTER RECEIVING TEXT OF REPORT TO SAY HE WAS "GRIEVED" BY MENTION OF

CORRUPTION AND DETENTION AND "COULD NOT IMAGINE THE US WOULD WANT TO CONTINUE GIVING AID TO A COUNTRY WHICH TOLERATED NEPOTISM AND CORRUPTION, AS YOUR REPORT STATES SWAZILAND DOES." DEPARTMENT REPLIED THAT IT APPLIED (PERFORCE) A CONSIDERABLY LESS PURITANICAL STANDARD IN REGARD TO THESE ISSUES THAN THE AMBASSADOR IMPLIED (IT WOULD, AFTER ALL, HESITATE TO CLAIM THAT NEITHER PROBLEM

EXISTED IN THE US) AND HAD NO INTENTION OF USING REPORT AS WEAPON TO REDUCE ASSISTANCE RATHER THAN AS SYMPATHETIC ATTEMPT AT CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM IN ORDER PROVIDE SOUND BASIS FOR CONTINUING AID. AMBASSADOR, ONLY PARTIALLY MOLLIFIED, HAS ASKED TO SEE AF OFFICIALS SOON TO DISCUSS REPORT AND SEEK FURTHER REASSURANCES. VANCE

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*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

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